SYSTEM AND METHOD OF COMMUNICATING STATUS AND PROTECTION INFORMATION BETWEEN CARDS IN A COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

ABSTRACT

Described are a system and method of communicating status and protection information between cards in a communications system. The system has a plurality of cards connected to a backplane. The plurality of cards includes a tributary card and a cross-connect card for forwarding data traffic between cards in the network element. The backplane has a link that is dedicated to carrying out-of-band signals between the tributary card and the cross-connect card. The tributary card transmits information to the cross-connect card in a first out-of-band signal over the link and the cross-connect card broadcasts the information to the plurality of cards in the network element in a second out-of-band signal.